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ABSTRACT

An annotated bibliography cites 38 journal articles published between 1976 and 1985 dealing with the teaching of vocabulary to second language learners. The bibliography includes both articles specific to instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL) or as a Foreign Language (EFL) and those with a broader scope, when the findings are generalizable to ESL. Some articles are in languages other than English, including French, German, and Dutch. Citations contain basic bibliographic information and a brief annotation. (MSE)

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A Selected Annotated Bibliography of Vocabulary in Teaching ESL and EFL, 1976-1985

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Abstract

This bibliography reviews articles published in journals from 1976 to 1985 and dealing with the teaching of vocabulary to second language learners. While the scope is broad, including articles from international journals which look at second language vocabulary teaching in general as well as specific ESL/EFL publications, the aim is toward surveying the field. Abstracts of those articles dealing with vocabulary teaching in languages other than English are included as their findings are generalizable to ESL/EFL settings.

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Alfes, Leonhard. (1980). Lassen sich aus latenten Lernstrategien Anspruche an ein systematisches "vocabulary building" ableiten? (Can latent learning strategies form the basis of a systematic approach to vocabulary building?) Englisch, 15(1), 1-6.

Drawing on research carried out by the author into the acquisition of vocabulary by Germans learning English, the article suggests that latent learning strategies enable a S to understand a range of words in the TL substantially larger than that which he is actually familiar. Frequently, the meaning of the new word is recognised on the basis of orthographic or phonological analogies to the NL, and by means of morphological and structural parrallels between words of each language and betweeen words in the TL. Context often leads the S to the meaning of a word never before encountered.

A knowledge of morphological theory is essential in order to teach vocabulary efficiency and does not involve vocabulary efficiently and does not involve mechanical learning of lists of related vocabulary items by Ss. Foreign language texts should, without being theoretical, draw the S's attention to morphological problems and suggest solutions by pointing out common false analogies or by referring back to similar types of word-formations in earlier chapters, for example.

(89)

Baxter, James. (1980). The dictionary and vocabulary behavior: A single word or a handful? TESOL Quarterly, 14, 325-36.

Choosing the most appropriate dictionary for students in the ESOL classroom is a recurrent problem. To provide a context for dictionary selection, this article presents a view of vocabulary referred to as "vocabulary behavior". An explicit distinction between spoken and written English reveals the relation between dictionary use, classroom vocabulary behavior and student success in meeting their communicative needs. Wheras a bilingual dictionary tends to encourage the use of a single lexical item, the monolingual dictionary demonstrates that definition is an alternative. Through use of a monolingual dictionary Ss are led to the use of conversational definition in speech and thus benefit from the full range of resources offered in spoken English. Questionnaire data are presented describing the dictionary habits and preferences of a population of Japanese Ss of English.

(90)

Binon, Jean, &Cornu, A.M. (1984). Du "receptif" au "constructif" (From "receptive" to "constructive") Bulletin Pedagogique, 50(6), 31-46.

Although the distinction between receptive and productive has often been reassessed, the concept "receptive" has never been questioned. However, research on reading and vocabulary teaching leads to questions on the validity of this distinction and the operational value of the notion "receptive" from the viewpoint of foreign-language teaching. It is shown that there is no dichotomy between receptive and productive, but one level, the interactive level, which relates to the communicative competence.

(91)

Boyd, John, & Boyd, Mary Ann. (1979). A new look at pictures. TESOL Newsletter, 13(2), 9.

A technique of using pictures in ESL classes, based on Silent Way theories, encourages communication, but retains elements of structured control. Students identify vocabulary from pictures and combine them within a framework indicated by the teacher. The teacher's primary unspoken guidance provides focus for the exercises, allowing the teacher to vary sentence complexity. The technique can be adapted to writing practice.

(92)

Brinton, Donna, & Gaskill, William. (1978). Using news broadcasts in the ESL/EFL classroom. TESOL Quarterly, 12, 403-413.

Techniques for using broadcast materials and methods of comprehension assessment are presented. Noted is the degree of vocabulary recycling which occurs.

(93)

Bullard, Nick. (1985). Word-based perception: A handicap in second language acquisition? English Language Teaching Journal, 39(1),28-32.

A group of proficient speakers of a second language (n=26 native French speakers and 28 native English speakers) were tested in their ability to identify individual words excised from spoken discourse. Ss were tested in both their native language and their second language and it was found that on the average, they were more proficient in their second language than in their first. It would appear that the acquisition of a second language involves a more word-based approach than that of the first language, and that despite, or even because of, this word-level proficiency, overall comprehension is less good in the second language.

(94)

Burling, Robbins. (1983). A proposal for computer-assisted instruction in vocabulary. System, 11, 181-190.

Vocabulary acquisition is an unavoidable hurdle in language instruction; despite the unpopularity of memorization, it has thus far been the only workable approach for language competence. An alternate method that would provide both conversational context and reading experience uses a combination of listening (taped conversations) and viewing (on a computer terminal screen). This would provide the S with immediate exposure to phonation and grammar as well as vocabulary, The drawbacks to designing a computer-assisted language program seem small as access to computer terminals is common.

(95)

Butler, Jeffrey. (1979). Cache-ing in on vocabulary. TESL Reporter, 12(3), 1-15.

Outlined is an approach to teaching vocabulary in an advanced ESL class, Requiring Ss to transform new vocabulary words into their several content forms--Ns, Vs, adjs, advs--helps writers see that only specific types of words can be used in various sentence slots. Thus the writers learn not just the meanings of new words, but how to use their various forms in different sentence contexts.

(96)

Channell, Joanna. (1981). Applying semantic theory to vocabulary teaching. English Language Teaching Journal, 35, 115-122.

The article discusses the application of principles of theoretical semantics to the teaching of vocabulary in ESl courses. Learners' goals and problems are outlined. Semantic theories that can be applied to these problems are described, and sample teaching materials are discussed.

(97)

Cohen, Andrew, & Aphek, Edna. (1981). Easifying second language learning. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 3, 227-234.

This study investigates some basic things that language learners do, such as learning vocabulary and participating in class, with the intent of identifying and describing strategies which ease the learning process. Specifically, answers were sought for the following questions: 1. how do student learn a new second language vocabulary nad 2. what insights into good and bad communicative strategies can be gained from empirical observation.

The subjects were 19 native English speaking Ss taking an intensive Hebrew course. A longitudinal study of vocabulary learning in a second language was carried out; it was found that most Ss merely tried to memorize words they did not know. 13 Ss reported using associations. Students using associations retained the words successfully, even if the word was not used outside of class.

A second study concerned classroom observation of communicative strategies coupled with verification by the Ss themselves.

(98)

Cornu, Anne-Marie. (1979). The first step in vocabulary teaching. The Modern Language Journal, 63, 262-272.

A first step in vocabulary teaching involves conveying to the students as efficiently as possible the reality covered by a concept. Related words should be grouped into a fairly narrow semantic field. Words are organized hierarchically with a given hyponym and other terms directly related to it in terms of distinctive semantic features which contrast them from the hyponym. Where there is a less direct relationship it is necessary to contrast words in terms of intensity along a scale. Finally, stylistic features must be used in distinguishing when to use certain words. The teacher should present different concrete words to students according to imageable relation, then to functional relation and to identification of the concrete word with a field. Research from linguistics and psychology substantiates the claims made.

(99)

Crow, John, & Quigley, June. (1985). A semantic field approach to passive vocabulary acquisition for reading comprehension. TESOL Quarterly, 19, 497-513.

Traditionally, vocabulary study has been based on a word-by-word approach and, as such, has often been criticised as a component in ESL curricula. This study compares a traditional approach to vocabulary instruction with an approach based on the semantic fields of words that appeared in college-level reading texts. Half of the words presented to control groups (traditional approach), according to the format used in current vocabulary texts. The semantic field approach was based on the association between five related words and a keyword that could be mentally substituted in context. Testing revealed some short term advantage for the control groups, but no significant difference was revealed on long-term testing. Since experimental groups were exposed to twice as many words in the same amount of time, the findings lend support to the use of the semantic field approach. In addition, long-term testing revealed, for the words in this study, a highly significant difference favoring vocabulary taught experimentally over incidental learning that may occur during exposure to academic English.

(100)

Davoust, Andre. (1985). A la recherche de mots perdus:Pour une politique du reseau dans l'enseignement du lexique (Rememberance of words past: Toward a politics of the network in teaching the lexicon). Les Langues Modernes, 79(3-4), 47-52.

A method for teaching reusable vocabulary in language classes is described. The importance of teaching context is emphasized and the teaching of phrases rather than words recommended. Transcribed oral texts (eg. interviews) provide the source for vocabulary choice with the criterion that they be reusable in conversation. Exercises are outlined that employ plays on words, and lexical and syntactic reuse. Comprehension exercises are not eliminated, but are restricted to texts capable of reutilization.

(101)

Erdmenger, Manfred. (1985). Word acquisition and vocabulary structure in third-year EFL learners. International Review of Applied Linguistics, 23, 159-164.

Data from multiword association tests show that words are linked in the human mind in semantically coherent clusters, or sometimes in the shape of a string. In the early stages of second language acquisition, word associations in the foreign language follow the tracks of native language associations, particularly in slow learners. From this fact, it is concluded that vocabulary acquisition can be facilitated by using the native language association patterns. Some data from aphasic patients that support this approach are discussed.

(102)

Esser, Ulrich. (1980). Wortschatzerwerb--aus fremdsprachenpsychologischer Sicht betrachtet (The acquisition of vocabulary and the psychology of foreign language learning). Fremdsphrachenunterricht, 24, 598-601.

How can the greatest number of words be retained with the minimum of effort? A questionnaire showed that most students favored the traditional method of learning vocabulary. Experiments showed that retention of vocabulary increases in direct proportion to the extent to which the lists are structured. If the semantic connection between the words is obvious, then recall improves. Lists of phonetically similar items (coal/foal/goal) lead to confusion and do not aid the memory. Items at the beginning and end of lists are remembered better than items in the middle. Performance in vocabulary tests improves as the Ss grasp of the language improves. Obscure and complex lexical items are remembered less well than more common and "simpler" vocabulary. Ability to retain vocabulary decreases with age. A foreign language course ought to take account of these various psychological factors influencing S's performance.

(103)

Fox, Jeremy. (1984). Computer-assisted vocabulary learning. English Language Teaching Journal, 38, 27-33.

Two approaches to computer-assisted learning (CAL) for the learning of vocabulary are discussed: 1. uncontextualized CAL, requiring one-word answere, and 2. contextualized or global forms of practice (eg. unscrambling or reconstructing a text). Uncontextualized exercises include opposites, collocations and analogies. Contextualized exercises include various types of text manipulation such as rebuilding a text or story, filling gaps,etc. Such exercises give Ss considerable control over their learning. The computer is not so much a drillmaster, more an information source.

Fox, Len. (1979). On acquiring an adequate second language vocabulary. Journal of Basic Writing, 2(3), 68-75.

The author proposes that increased amounts of reading should be assigned at all levels of ESL programs, and he suggests ways to reconstruct programs and to teach reading and vocabulary effectively.

(105)

Gidmark, Jill. (1982). Tailoring reading and vocabulary courses to the needs of non-native speakers of English. Alternative Higher Education, 6, 172-183.

The integration of instruction in reading and vocabulary can aid language learning for non-native speakers of English. Theories behind some of the difficulties in learning English are discussed and some practical methods for lessening those difficulties are suggested. The differences in focus and emphasis between teaching reading and vocabulary skills to native students and teaching the same skills to non-native students are delineated.

(106)

Hall, James el.al. (1981). Mnemotechnics: Some limitations of the mnemonic keyword method for the study of foreign language vocabulary. Journal of Educational Psychology, 73, 345-357.

The effectiveness of the mnemonic keyword method was examined in four experiments with college students learning lists of 24-32 pairs of Spanish nouns and their English equivalents. The first three experiments in which the lists were presented for periods of free study, yielding the following results: 1. the keyword condition, with keywords supplied by the experimenter, was similar or somewhat inferior to the control conditions both in the Spanish-English (forward) and in the English-Spanish (backward) direction; 2. the keyword condition was clearly inferior to controls when Ss were required to generate keywords; 3. keyword and control conditions were similar in retention over one week. In the fourth experiment the keyword method was superior to the control condition with successive, experimenter-paced presentation but inferior with free-study presentation; free study was maredly superior to paced presentation for both keyword and control conditions. Implications for the further study and application of the keyword method, and mnemotechnics more generally, are discussed.

Hill, L.A. (1978). Practice in intelligent guessing of meaning from context. Zielsprache Englisch, 3, 1-2.

Discusses exercises in foreign language teaching in which the learner can, from experience in his own language, conjecture the meaning of foreign words from the context.

(108)

Hill, L.A. (1980). Extending students' vocabulary: Prefixes and suffixes. Zielsprache Englisch, 10(3), 8-10.

Describes a teaching method for vocabulary development based on word formation by means of affixes.

(109)

Judd, Elliott. (1978). Vocabulary teaching and TESOL: A need for reevaluation of existing assumptions. TESOL Quarterly, 12, 71-76.

Vocabulary instruction in TESOL has been traditionally relegated to secondary status in favor of an emphasis on the teaching of syntactic structures. According to the traditional theories, vocabulary acquisition has also been seem as a means to improve reading and listening comprehension and not as a skill vital in its own right.

These traditional views are challenged in this paper as being inappropriate for ESL programs on the university level. Massive vocabulary instruction should begin as soon as possible and the status of lexical knowledge should be given greater emphasis in TESOL programs. Relevant lexical items that are within the S's syntactic knowledge should be selected and immediately integrated into the classroom setting. Repetition of vocabulary items in a natural linguistic context will aid the students in dealing with multiple meanings and sociolinguistic contexts of words and phrases. In short, the author argues for a new emphasis on vocabulary instruction in TESOL programs.

(110)

Kirschbaum, E. (1980). Exakte arbeit an der lexik--eine unabdingbare voraussetzung fur die verwiklichung der kommunikativen ziele (Exact work on vocabulary--a necessary prerequisite to the realization of communicative aims). Fremdsprachenunterricht, 24, 162-164.

The communicative goal of L2 instruction can be realized only when learners are motivated to retain a considerably large lexicon for a long period of time. Vocabulary teaching must be intensive, target-oriented, rational, and effective. Meanings of the new lexical items, their acoustic and written forms, derivative peculiarities and usage must be taught. Special attention should be devoted to polysemy, inter- and intra- linguistic inferences and the connection with other words in the word groups and sentences. Methodological suggestions are offered.

(11)

Kruse, Anna. (1979). Vocabulary in context. English Language Teaching Journal, 33, 207-213.

There is a lack of effective methods for teaching vocabulary in EFL reading programs. Emphasis has often been on rote memorization, rather than on vocabulary development skills. Contextual aids, illustrations, for example, use of prefixes, suffixes and roots, definition clues and inference clues from discourse can be employed to teach students ways of guessing meaning from context and structure. A specific program for teaching vocabulary development skills is presented.

(112)

McKay, Sandra. (1980). Teaching the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic dimensions of verbs. TESOL Quarterly, 14, 17-26.

The audiolingual emphasis on teaching structure with a minimum of vocabulary has contributed little to the development of vocabulary materials. Lexical usage, however, is an area in which ESL students demonstrate a considerable number of errors. In an effort to help develop lexical competence, this paper illustrates one strategy for teaching vocabulary with the use of a computer corpus. Because of their inherent difficulty, verbs are the main focus of the materials, although the technique could be used with other parts of speech. It is assumed here that knowing a word involves knowing how to use the word syntactically, semantically, and pragmatically.

(113)

Martin, Anne. (1976). Teaching academic vocabulary to foreign graduate students. TESOL Quarterly, 10, 91-99.

The foreign graduate student in an American university needs to exhibit a wide range of academic skills. To participate effectively in the research-oriented environment, he needs an excellant command of vocabulary; both technical and academic. A method of teaching acadeemic vocabulary to the intermediate/advanced EFL graduate S is discussed. The term academic vocabulary is defined and compared to the terms scientific, technical and subtechnical vocabulary. Criteria used for selecting academic vocabulary items are discussed. The vocabulary is divided into three ares appropriate for teaching: the research process, analysis, and evaluation. Selected items and sample exercises for each area are given and broader applications in each of the four areas of language use are described.

(114)

Nation, I.S.P. (1982). Beginning to learn foreign vocabulary: A review of the research. RELC Journal, 13, 14-36.

An attempt is made to provide a comprehensive review of the experimental findings on foreign language vocabulary learning. Almost all research involves learning word pairs made up of a foreign word paired with its native language translation. Direct and indirect vocabulary learning are compared; and evidence on how much vocabulary can be learned in a given time, how many repetitions are required for learning to occur, and why some words are more difficult to learn than others is reviewed. Differnet techniques for receptive and productive vocabulary learning are presented.

(115)

Nattinger, James. (1980). A lexical phrase grammar for ESL. TESOL Quarterly, 14, 337-344.

Current work in lexical grammars suggests that we need to think of lexicon for ESL classes in much broader terms and must pay more attention to the importance of prefabricated speech routines in language behavior. The article discusses the kind and extent of lexical phrases, using categories from recent work in artificial intelligence, and outlines further research that is necessary to make these speech routines an integral part of the syllabus.

(116)

Paivio, Allan, & Desrochers, Alain. (1981). Mnemonic techniques in second language learning. Journal of Educational Psychology, 73, 780-795.

A review of research on mnemonic techniques as used in L2 learning, emphasizing imagery-based techniques. The keyword technique involves using a specific word in the familiar language to establish an acoustic and imaginal link between the unfamiliar word and its translation equivalent in the native language. Laboratory experiments show that the technique clearly facilitates the learning of L2 vocabulary when learning is measured by a comprehension test that requires subjects to translate the new words into their native-language equivalents. Adolescents and adults benefit most from generating their own interactive images, but younger children require the support of interactive pictures or sentences. The method does not have an immediate facilitating effect on productive recall unless the new response items are already available in memory.

(117)

Ramsey, Robert. (1981). A technique for interlingual lexico-semantic comparison: The lexigram. TESOL Quarterly, 15, 15-24.

The is a need for vocabulary research into vocabulary structure in the field of L2 learning. The issue of vocabulary in EFL/ESL curriculum is addressed, and a technique is introduced for interlingual lexico-semantic comparison; the lexigram. The technique is based on a study of restricted word association data obtained from NSs of English (n=100), Castilian Spanish and Catalan. English data from NN English speakers in Barcelona are compared with data from native speakers.

(118)

Richards, Jack. (1976). The role of vocabulary teaching. TESOL Quarterly, 10, 77-90.

A consideration of the knowledge that is assumed by lexical competence is offered as a frame of reference for assessing vocabulary teaching. Linguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic aspects of word knowledge are examined. These include word frequency, vocabulary growth in native speakers, collocation, register, case relations, underlying forms, word association and semantic structure. Vocabulary techniques are discussed according to the way that they attempt to build up these aspects of vocabulary knowledge.

(119)

Rivers. Wilga. (1981). Apples of gold in pictures of silver: Where have all the words gone? Studia Linguistica,35, 114-129.

A plea is made for more emphasis on the importance of vocabulary in foreign language classes. It is suggested that the relevance of a rich vocabulary to communication has been lost in recent years. It should be remembered that a foreign language not only provides opportunities for the acquisition of forms, but encourages communication of ideas and expression of individuality through these forms. Ss should be helped to choose words that express subtleties and to understand others in an intercultural context.

(120)

Rohrer, Josef. (1980). Learning styles and teaching vocabulary. Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics, 280-288.

The role of vocabulary learning is reconsidered and reasons for giving it priority over the learning of other foreign language elements are proposed. In view of certain aspects of memory, a conceptological approach is given preference to a lexical approach. Five cognitive learning styles are addressed. It is suggested that they increase the effectiveness of vocabulary learning because they use universal thinking behaviors. These thinking behaviors exemplified by appropriate vocabulary learning exercises are: 1. conceptualization 2.taxonomic thinking 3.anological reasoning 4. association 5. closure. Although the discussion is restricted to mainly cognitive learning styles, the importance of the affective dimensions inherent in any learning experience is stressed.

(121)

Scanlan, T. (1979). Teaching British and American language and culture with the aid of mail-order catalogues. English Language Teaching Journal, 34(1), 68-71.

The article discusses practical ways in which mail-order catalogues may be used in teaching ESL in order to promote vocabulary acquisition, induce cultural awareness, and encourage conversation in English.

(122)

Searfoss, L.W., Smith, C.C.,& Bean, T.W. (1981). An integrated language strategy for second language learners. TESOL Quarterly, 15, 383-389.

L2 learners face two simultaneous problems in content area classes: acquiring specialized concepts and vocabulary, and acquiring general communicative facility. The adapted guided writing procedure (GWP) provides instruction and practice in basic communication skills by using oral language as a bridge to reading and writing. It activates S's prior knowledge to furnish a framework for the acquisition of new concepts. The GWP offer L2 learners an opportunity for meaningful practice of the TL in a step-by-step sequence.

(123)

Tritch, M. (1981). Improving vocabulary problems in co-occurance and vocabulary marking. English Teaching Forum, 19(2), 22-27.

The author suggests a way of looking at difficulties students have in using words appropriately, and an approach for presenting this information to students.

(124)

Wagner, M.J. & Tilney, G. (1983). The effect of "superlearning techniques" on the vocabulary acquisition and alpha brainwave production of language learners. TESOL Quarterly, 17, 5-17.

This study investigated the applicability of techniques adapted from Lazanov's "Suggestopedia" described in Ostrander and Schroeder Superlearning. Lack of scientific validity in experiments substantiating claims about Suggestopedia prompted this study. 21 adult ESL students, language teachers, and graduate music education majors were taught a discrete 300 word german vocabulary list over a 5-week period using relaxation tapes manufactured by Superlearning, Inc., using Suggestopedia methodology and measuring brainwaves using electroencephalography. Baroque music (n=7), no-Baroque music (n=7) and a no-contact control group (n=7) learned the same vocabulary. Analysis of language acquisition showed no significant improvement across the 5-weeks. No significant drop in scores across the experimental period suggests vocabulary was retained in all groups. When modes of presentation were compared, those taught by traditional methods showed significantly more vocabulary learning than those taught by the Superlearning techniques. No change in brainwave activity could be detected in any group. Although scrupulous care to preserve Superlearning techniques was taken, accelerated learning could not be sustantiated.

Walter, H. (1984). Einfuhrung in die texterschliessung durch kombinieren und intelligentes raten (Introduction to the comprehension of a text through combining and intelligent guessing). Neusprachliche Mitteilungen, 37(1) 27-34.

Ss should be encouraged to read texts in a foreign language and not be put off by long prepatory lists of new vocabulary. An experiment is reported in which 90% of the new vocabulary in the text was arrived at without any kind of explanation. The second part of the article discusses Carton's notion of "inferencing" and demonstrates useful techniques which the teacher can use to contextualize new vocabulary. The rest of the article is devoted to detailed descriptions of how "guessing" and the comprehension of unknown vocabulary can be enhanced.